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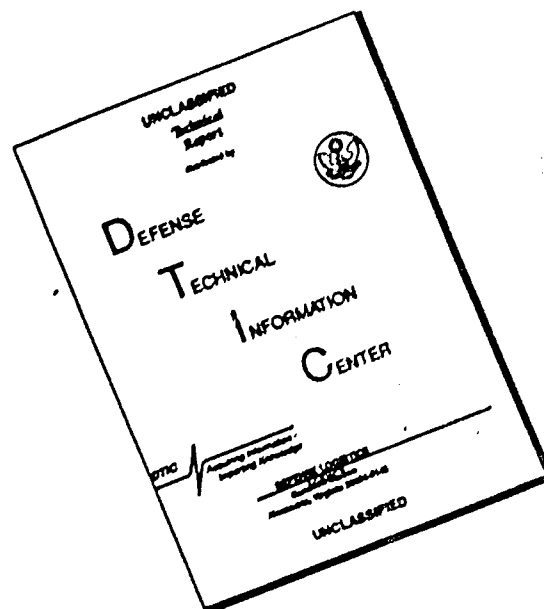
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AGDA-A (19) (5 Feb 71)

OT-UT-71B092

18 February 1971

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: [redacted]  
 4th Infantry Division, Period 1 July 1970 to 1 December 1970 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Reference: AR 1-26, subject, Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U) dated 4 November 1966.
2. Transmitted herewith is the report of MG William A. Burke subject as above. (11) 1 Dec 70 - P. 11 (01)
3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 1-26; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army. (12) 35p.
4. Information of actions initiated under provisions of AR 1-26, as a result of subject report should be provided ACSFOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

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*Kenneth G. Wickham*  
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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~~18 JAN 1971~~

AVHDO-DO

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report - MG William A. Burke

Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development  
Department of the Army  
Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Inclosed are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report prepared by Major General William A. Burke. The report covers the period July through November 1970, during which time MG Burke served as Commanding General, 4th Infantry Division.

2. MG Burke is recommended as a guest speaker at appropriate service schools and colleges.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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Clark W. Stevens Jr.  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
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SENIOR OFFICER DEBRIEFING REPORT

(RCS - CSFOR-74) (U)

COUNTRY: Republic of Vietnam  
DEBRIEF REPORT BY: Major General William A. Burke  
DUTY ASSIGNED: Commanding General, 4th Infantry Division  
INCLUSIVE DATES: 1 July 1970 - 1 December 1970  
DATE OF REPORT: 1 December 1970

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## CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
MISSIONS AND OBJECTIVES	
OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT	
The Area of Operations	2
The Nature of the Enemy	3
Local Governmental Activities	
U. S. Forces	
ASSESSMENT	5
EXPERIENCES IN COMMAND	6
Doctrine	
Organization	7
Training	10
Intelligence	12
Operations	14
Tactical Operations	
Planning	
Maneuver	15
Fire Support	21
Combat Support	23
Vietnamization	25
Civil Affairs Operations	
Base Operations - Installation Defense	26
Redeployment Operations	
Logistics	
Personnel	28
CONCLUSIONS	29
INCL	

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## COMMANDING GENERAL, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION DEBRIEFING REPORT

by

Major General Wm A. Burke

This report relates my personal observations concerning combat operations against the NVA/VC in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam while commanding the 4th Infantry Division. During this period, our primary mission changed from one of tactical operations to redeployment, as U.S. forces continued their phased withdrawal from the RVN. Thus I will also present ideas on pertinent aspects of moving toward redeployment from an active combat environment. I do not intend to go into great detail on every facet of conducting division operations in the Central Highlands, but rather to select from my experience in command certain observations which may prove useful in future studies; the detailed facts can be obtained from division Operational Reports-Lessons Learned and from Combat After Action Reports.

I assumed command of the 4th Infantry Division on 1 July 1970 at Camp Radcliff near An Khe, coming directly from nine months of command of the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) on the DMZ. At the same time I became the sub-zone coordinator for the U.S. sub-zone around An Tuc District, Binh Dinh Province, MR 2. The missions assigned and operational environment in which the division was employed, described herein, shaped my assessment of the situation and formed the basis for the impressions and conclusions which I relate in this report.

### MISSIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The combat mission of the 4th Infantry Division was to interdict enemy routes of infiltration, to locate and destroy enemy forces and supplies, to participate in combined operations with ARVN and FVMAF in RVN MR 2, to help train local defense forces, and to provide technical and logistical assistance to support GVN programs in the division area of operations.

As a sub-zone coordinator, I had the mission of coordinating administration and security matters for U.S. and other FVMAF units in the division area of operations, including responsibility for the defense of Camp Radcliff.

In early October, the division was given the mission to disengage its battalions from combat in a phased sequence and to redeploy to CONUS. The date for terminating combat operations was 17 November 1970, and for completion of redeployment was 15 December 1970. The organic armored cavalry squadron, one infantry battalion, and the medium artillery battalion (SP) were transferred to I FFORCEV to remain in RVN.

### OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The nature of enemy activity in the division area of operations, the terrain, weather, and the capabilities and activities of FVMAF and local GVN created a unique operational environment, unlike that which confronted other U.S. divisions.

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### The Area of Operations

The division normally operated in the western half of Binh Dinh Province and was responsible for an area encompassing some 1800 square miles. Except in the southwestern portion, the area was bordered by mountain ranges up to 1500 meters elevation, which provided the enemy relatively safe, concealed sanctuaries into which to withdraw when engaged. Outside of the populated areas around An Khe, along QL 19, and between the An Khe Pass and the Mang Giang Pass, extensive forests afforded the enemy concealment and routes of movement, and tended to restrict our mobility. Two major enemy base areas--202 on the southwest and 226 in the east--lay on the periphery of the division area.



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### The Nature of the Enemy

Enemy activity was generally low in the AO, and contacts were usually with small elements of from two to four individuals. The enemy showed little desire to engage allied forces other than by standoff attacks by fire on firebases, installations, and convoys. While there were generally only VC local force units in the AO, major enemy forces were located in the division area of interest. The principal threat from the B-3 Front was the 95B Regiment with elements located in Base Area 202. To the east, elements of the 3d NVA Division of MR 5 were located in Base Area 226 and constituted the principal threat. Collectively, enemy forces totaled about 6,000 soldiers, including 10 infantry battalions, two artillery/AA battalions, seven combat support battalions, and 21 local force infantry and sapper companies. The principal enemy activity in the area consisted of movement of units, replacements, and supplies along well-established corridors through the area, usually in support of enemy units targeted against the pacification program and allied installations and LOC. When engaged, the enemy normally made every effort to break contact and withdraw.

### Local Governmental Activities

Since the movement of US forces to the Central Highlands in 1966, the area around An Khe, along QL 19, and in the Song Con Valley has been relatively stable. The GVN has progressively gained control of the populated areas with security being provided by territorial forces. The quality of the RF/PF forces varied, but generally their effectiveness was low. There were no ARVN forces in the AO, but I frequently conducted combined operations with the adjacent 22d ARVN Division and found it to be a combat effective force. Outside the organized villages, in the jungles and mountains, the government exerted no control over the Montagnard population, and showed little interest in winning their confidence. The Montagnards sometimes acted as guides and engaged in food production for the enemy.

### U. S. Forces

Other than the normal IFFV and USARV combat support and combat service support elements, the 4th Infantry Division was the major U. S. unit in the area. Army aviation and engineer support was limited and exerted a restricting influence on the desired tempo of tactical operations.

Division Organization and Structure. The division was organized with two brigades of three infantry battalions each, one mechanized infantry battalion, one armored cavalry squadron, one ranger company, Division Support Command, DIVARTY, and normal aviation, medical, and staff elements. The infantry battalions operated under the control of either of the two brigades, while the armored cavalry squadron and the mechanized infantry battalion normally operated under division control. Resources of the division were used to organize provisional units to secure Camp Radcliff and to operate its facilities.

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Recent Activities. In the months preceding my arrival, elements of the division had been involved in several large-scale operations, generally some distance from the division base, at that time Camp Enari near Pleiku. Camp Enari had been the division's base camp since 1966, and the Pleiku-Kontum-Darlac area had been the division principal AO. In April, one brigade slice was redeployed to the CONUS for inactivation, and, simultaneously, the division moved from Camp Enari to Camp Radcliff and assumed responsibility for the current AO. Camp Radcliff was run down and required extensive repair and upgrade. The AO was undeveloped, without a tactical road net, and with few cleared areas for fire bases or landing zones. In May the division entered Base Area 702 in Cambodia as part of the allied attack on that sanctuary. This division-level operation at the end of a 100-mile LOC heavily taxed equipment and personnel.

Disposition and Tactics. When I assumed command of the 4th Infantry Division, its forces were disposed as follows: 1st Brigade was conducting operations in the jungle (vicinity BR 3792) approximately 45 kilometers north-northeast of Camp Radcliff against elements of the 3d NVA Division. The 2d Brigade was conducting operations (vicinity BR 6075) approximately 30 kilometers north-northeast of Camp Radcliff in the Song Con River infiltration corridor leading to Base Area 226. The 2d Brigade targets were elements of the 3d NVA Division and the GIA LAI Provincial Unit. The 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry was conducting security operations along Highway QL 19 from the Pleiku Defense Sector boundary to the Capitol ROK infantry Division/4th Infantry Division boundary. The 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry was preparing to operate against the 95B Regiment in Base area 202.

The brigade maneuver battalions were deployed in widely dispersed areas in the jungle employing company-size elements in search and destroy operations. Command, control, communications, and fire support were provided from a series of mutually supporting fire bases, each secured by a rifle company. Company operations generally involved some form of platoon cloverleaf patrol with elements man-packing three to four days' accompanying supplies.

Intelligence. The division had a well-organized and effective G2 section and used a functioning data storage computer to store and collate data. It depended largely on division and higher level collection agencies for current intelligence information, although captured documents and POWs were also fully exploited. Generally, however, the subordinate units were still adapting to the new area, with its thick vegetation and scattered enemy, and had not yet developed that important feel for the enemy which comes with time. Target acquisition was also difficult in the environment described.

Strength and Training. I found the division only slightly below authorized strength, and staffed and led by competent personnel. The men were experienced and proficient in tactical techniques. The division was

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maintaining at least 110 men in the field in each rifle company, and support elements were adequately staffed.

However, the personnel forecast for the future was anything but good. The division contained a large number of "short-timers" who had not met redeployment criteria when the 3d Brigade was redeployed, and who, therefore, had remained in other elements of the division. Consequently, I was faced with almost a complete turnover of personnel within a three-month period. Additionally, there were strong indications that qualified replacements would not be available in adequate numbers to compensate for the large losses. Normal rotation was to cause a complete turnover of the principal staff officers, and nearly every senior commander either had just assumed his position or was about to leave. Eventually the infantry strength dropped to 85%, with, for example, less than 50% of the infantry E6s being available. Corresponding shortages of majors and captains also were experienced.

Logistics. The logistical situation, although only recently tailored to fit the relocated division at Camp Radcliff, was well-organized and functioning. Resupply to forward units was principally by air, as there were practically no usable land routes throughout the AO. An added burden was, therefore, placed on aircraft from IFFV resources to support the division logistically. Maintenance facilities at Camp Radcliff were still being built or rebuilt. This, plus the recent move from Camp Enari, the Cambodian operation, and residual internal adjustments resulting from the loss of the brigade slice, had created unusual strains on equipment and its maintenance that were still being felt in deadline rates.

Morale. I found a high state of morale and esprit de corps and a strong sense of accomplishment and unit identity throughout the division. The recent operation in Cambodia had heightened the effect. There was, however, a natural feeling of uncertainty concerning the future, based on the redeployment of the 3d Brigade and the subsequent move from Camp Enari. Rumors abounded concerning the imminent departure of the remainder of the division, which, along with the approaching rotation of many senior officers and NCO's, created a situation requiring careful command attention at all levels.

### ASSESSMENT

I quickly concluded that the division essentially could operate anywhere within the AO at any time, secure in the knowledge that the enemy, while able to harass us, could not preclude our mission accomplishment. The restrictions on our operations were much more limited by the relative lack of helicopter assets, especially hooks (CH-47), and by the almost complete absence of suitable routes for ground resupply or cavalry and mechanized operations. Considering the division mission, while we had the basic capability to destroy the enemy forces, the major problem was, and has continued to be, to find and fix the enemy so he could be brought to

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battle, With the infantry just getting the feel for the area, I concluded that perhaps new techniques would evolve as we learned more about the enemy's activities and his capabilities. I recognized the requirement for continued emphasis on completion and further development of the logistical support base at Camp Radcliff if we were to maintain an adequate materiel readiness posture. It became apparent that the engineer battalion, now minus one company, would be needed to help develop the facilities at Camp Radcliff as well as to open up the area of operations. It also was apparent that with a massive personnel turbulence problem in the immediate future, combat effectiveness could be expected to decrease slightly, and that if a quick and effective training program was not initiated, an unacceptable reduction in combat effectiveness could result. During the next few months, I considered my most important task being that of sustaining the combat effectiveness of the division so that the area of influence and the tempo of operations against the enemy would not be reduced. Many of my observations are associated with that goal.

### EXPERIENCES IN COMMAND

The task of sustaining or enhancing the division combat effectiveness, while conducting active combat operations under the conditions described, required a major effort in each of the principal command functional areas. In essence, its very accomplishment takes on the appearance of a military operation, with subordinate commanders fully apprised of objectives to be attained, the staff energetically combining its efforts toward one command goal, and the cooperative support of higher authority needed. Once underway, a natural enthusiasm evolved which overcame many problems and developed a progressively stronger unit.

The same programmed objective approach also was used to accomplish our redeployment tasks, with similar success, as all concerned participated in the planned countdown to zero strength.

The apparent emphasis on sustaining combat effectiveness during an unusual period of personnel turbulence or on redeployment activities as units progressively stood down is not a true picture of the command interest and tremendous effort exerted to accomplish tactical missions. As if by plan, by mid-October the bulk of the training and rotational problem had been overcome, only to phase directly into the redeployment effort. Consequently, throughout the period such tasks competed for the time and energy of my staff and subordinate commands. During these difficult times, it became important to keep one's "eye on the ball," and I continually placed the priority effort in support of our tactical operations.

### Doctrine

Achievement of excellence in any combat operation requires a high order of professionalism which translated directly into "know-how," i.e., knowing what the doctrine is and how to apply it. I do not consider Vietnam to have changed this thesis, except that we have made it more



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difficult by building up a body of jargon concerning the applicable techniques employed. Actually most are well accepted techniques being taught in our school system but by another name. In many cases, RVN-developed techniques have no published doctrine, are often learned by hearsay, and are only loosely related to the organization of the ROAD division.

I have yet to see a situation here where accepted and established tactics and techniques were not applicable and could not have been used. (I am convinced that their use develops a stronger and more productive unit.) One advantage to conducting operations in accordance with doctrine is that during a period of great personnel turbulence, it permits a leader to relate immediately to the newcomer and communicate effectively with him, as opposed to the replacement having to learn a set of terms different from that which he has been taught. It makes his training relevant and improves his confidence. Also, with properly trained personnel, use of accepted doctrine unfolds an entire body of techniques which may not otherwise be thought about. An example of an area in which applied doctrine increases the combat power available is the perimeter defense of a fire support base. In some cases the responsible unit commander, who usually is directed to "secure the perimeter," concerns himself only with the actions of the men on the line, a form of guard duty. But one must properly translate that task to the deliberate defense of the fire support base and interpret the perimeter line as a FEBA, and he becomes concerned with boundaries, area of operations, close defensive and final protective fires, security operations, and, in general, the application of the fundamentals of defense.

Conducting operations in accordance with doctrine also provides standards for training and evaluation of performance and a yardstick for measuring success. Due to the studied inter-relationship of various elements of tactical doctrine, it also permits one to uncover weak or strong areas not otherwise noted. For instance, one may, but should not, accept the failure to provide a platoon leader with an 81mm mortar FO on the premise that the platoon leader can adjust his own fires. What is not acceptable, among others, is the loss of a valuable alternate means of communications, the fire control net, which is of great importance to that platoon leader.

Another advantage of the proper use of doctrine is that it reduces pattern-type operations and enhances flexibility through operations adapted to the situation. The leader can make honest estimates of the situation based on his professional knowledge and is not tied to some unauthenticated order that "in 'Nam we do it this way." A demand to maintain proficiency in all elements of the organization will be developed, since any may be called upon to perform their mission at any time.

### Organization

One of the greatest deterrents to the application of proper doctrine is the manner in which we rearrange the TOE. This tampering is excused by the

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axiom that a commander should organize his force to accomplish his mission. The need to do this is recognized, but we end up with the TOE's being modified to provide spaces for base camp operations, augmentation to the AG awards section, and all sorts of other activities--admittedly all worthwhile and justifiable. However, the effect is to reduce the flexibility of the subordinate unit commander to organize his force for combat, negate the ROAD concept, and to make invalid the basis on which the doctrine was developed. Further complicate this by assigning administrative responsibilities to the brigade, as is often done in Vietnam, and one quickly has a situation to which only the "short-timer" at the end of his tour in-country can relate. It becomes an ever less efficient and less productive cycle as the reduced strength and unfilled MOS positions create apparently excess equipment, maintenance backlogs, or knowledge gaps in how to use the equipment which, in turn, establish a pattern of operations without a function being performed. Perhaps the pitfall is illustrated in the failure to use the AN/PPS-5 for target acquisition--it is just too difficult to maintain, and the personnel are needed to defend the fire support base--or the use of critical LLC's beating brush as llB's, since we cannot man-pack the mortars and ammunition with the limited manpower left to the company. One cannot expect maximum efficiency from a combat unit concurrently performing administrative chores in some distant area or reduced in strength by withdrawn spaces used to support base camp functions. An automatic and maintained personnel overage is a must, else maneuver elements suffer.

Control of TOE Changes. Personal attention must be given to the detailed organization of the division, and any modification to the TOE must be carefully tailored to the situation. Further, unit commanders must be repeatedly informed of the changes and impact on their expected performance. If not done, in the fog of TOE and MTOE changes, manning levels, and unfilled MOS and personnel shortages, commanders tend to lose sight of the force they should have available to employ. A rifle company minus its weapons squad in all rifle platoons and with all 81mm mortars in storage, no mortar FO's, and its mortarmen conducting search operations cannot be expected to perform the mission specified in its TOE. It is incapable of fire and maneuver and is simply one big patrol on a reconnaissance operation. If this is desired, then the attendant loss of skills and flexibility of employment must be accepted--which I do not. Similarly, a cavalry unit left for long periods of time in a highway security role will, if not closely supervised, establish a guard roster and regard each vehicle and the skills of each man as equal, with an attendant rapid loss in scout, infantry, and mortar skills. I believe that the senior commanders must pay close attention to what is happening at MOS and fire team level if combat effectiveness is to be enhanced and/or retained. A weapons squad leader position vacated and left unfilled means that no one in that company reads FM 23-67. If allowed to multiply throughout other skills, many useful techniques and procedures which constitute the expertise of the unit disappear and combat effectiveness is reduced, not enhanced.

ROAD Organisational Changes - AN/PPS-5 Radar. Some changes in the ROAD organization are useful and necessary. For example, the current allocation

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of the AN/PPS-5 ground surveillance radar does not recognize threat or need. In our case, sightings were often low. In addition, movement over difficult terrain or by helicopter, combined with humidity problems, caused an unacceptable deadline rate. As a low density item with only a small number of personnel authorized in each battalion, a battalion could quickly lose its use through lack of repair parts or loss of expertise. Therefore, I consolidated the maneuver battalion radar sections under the division artillery commander, and took advantage of the flexibility gained by the total resources being available to him to improve training, maintenance, and utilization. After a concentrated maintenance and training period, the radars were employed in direct support of (and at the request of) the maneuver elements, resulting in a greatly improved target acquisition and intelligence system.

Air Cavalry Troop. Another organizational problem area concerns the air cavalry troop of the division armored cavalry squadron. In classic reconnaissance roles in a conventional environment, this assignment may be satisfactory, although I tend to doubt it--and I am an Armor officer. In Vietnam, the heavy maintenance and supply requirements of the air cavalry troop, and the associated burden these requirements place on the cavalry squadron, far outweigh any tactical advantage which might accrue. Additionally, the tactical functions performed by the air cavalry troop, with its wide-ranging ability, especially when compared with the rather restricted mobility of ground cavalry in jungle and mountain terrain, make efficient control by the squadron commander difficult. The air cavalry troop, with its VR, gunship, and aero-rifle platoon capabilities, is an extremely useful and effective asset, especially for counterinsurgency operations. I kept operational control of the entire troop at division level and tasked the troop to operate independently under division control or to support designated units. This still placed a management and support task on the cavalry squadron, including the requirement to monitor aircraft maintenance activities with which they had little familiarity. I would advocate modifying the TOE to move the air cavalry troop out of the division cavalry squadron and into the aviation battalion. When the armored cavalry squadron requires the air cavalry troop, it can still be made available with no difficulty in command relationships.

Installation Defense Coordinator. There is one critical aspect of the security arrangement for a large installation such as Camp Radcliff which I consider unsatisfactory and which could not be corrected with resources available to me. This is that the security responsibility for the installation and the TAOR which surrounds it had been assigned to the commanding officer, and his staff, of a major subordinate command (division artillery or a brigade). In this capacity, his title is the Installation Defense Coordinator (IDC). I contend that to assign this mission to a senior commander is not only unfair to him because it places him in a "two hat" position both of equal importance, but also because it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for him to divide himself and his staff between these two tasks with maximum efficiency. The responsibilities of

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the IDC make that position, of itself, a full time task. While sufficient personnel resources can be made available to organize a staff for the IDC, an officer in the grade of colonel, which the position demands, is not available except as noted above. This requirement should be recognized, and a colonel provided on a case-by-case basis. Not only would he assume the IDC responsibilities, but also the supervisory responsibility for post command functions. Such assumptions would insure coordination of inter-related activities and provide for a smooth transition during periods of drawdown and redeployment. Another way to accomplish this would be to upgrade the lieutenant colonel deputy post commander (DPC), who also normally is taken out of the division's hide.

Slice Concept of Redeployment. The brigade slice of divisional combat support and combat service support elements inactivated in conjunction with the redeployment of the 3d Brigade in April did not leave in the division the best possible balance of these types of units. Combat support and combat service support missions do not diminish proportionately with the incremental withdrawal of combat elements. I recognize that certain space ceilings must be met, but a more selective system of space reduction consistent with combat and environmental requirements can be made. As an example, the division could have profitably used spaces from the medical battalion to permit retention of more maintenance battalion personnel. Correspondingly, certain less-essential headquarters and combat unit positions could have been eliminated in favor of retaining the inactivated engineer company. The commander should be permitted to tailor the forces for an incremental drawdown to insure that those remaining at his disposal can best accommodate the mission with which he is charged.

### Training.

In my opinion, a well-trained and tactically proficient unit is a study in contrast. It is at once enduring and also fragile; it can withstand the loss of key personnel (including three battalion commanders in one of my units in a relatively short period of time) and still remain intrinsically strong while the reins of leadership are being picked up. The proficiency of such a unit can be self-sustaining provided it receives replacements in a timely fashion, and providing also that it adheres to the fundamental that "training is continuous." Interrupt the steady input of new and qualified personnel into that unit, and the expertise and combat effectiveness flows out. It is a rare unit commander indeed who can sustain proficiency under such conditions or upgrade a poorly-trained unit while concurrently conducting tactical operations. This was the situation confronting my units for several months and obviously called for my immediate attention.

Recognizing that emphasis would be required over a period of time, I elected a multi-faceted approach:

Units were directed to conduct specified refresher training on the firebases.



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Special schools were established in certain technical areas, such as operations of the FADAC and the AN/PPS-5.

In other areas, such as mortar crew and mechanical ambush training, special training teams traveled to the units in the field to provide the instruction. A good example was the unmanned mechanical ambush (which the division was not using at all). Our training team was carefully trained and rehearsed before proceeding to the fire bases. It carried handout training literature and realistic demonstration devices. By actually teaching the subject on site, maximum application of the devices to the environment of the unit occurred. The training and subsequent use of the Claymore in an unmanned ambush role was quite successful. Units accounted for over 25 kills with this procedure alone in the first six weeks.

Operations orders specified detailed methods and techniques to be used to insure proper application, e.g., coordination of preparatory fires during combat assaults or the use of multi-ship LZ's/PZ's whenever possible.

Key leaders were enlisted in an instruction effort wherever they went, teaching, counselling, advising, explaining, and demonstrating the application of fundamentals at the soldier level. I used the ADC for maneuver extensively in that role.

A formal standdown training period at Camp Radcliff was initiated. It became the most effective means to upgrade the quality of operations as our personnel turnover continued.

Standdown Training. A one-week intensive training program, without outside duties, provided an excellent opportunity to organize the units properly, improve leadership skills, and to regain techniques lost or having been slighted. The impact of the personnel turnover and inadequate number of small unit leaders was so great that the maneuver battalions just had to have the time to find themselves. The leaders needed to familiarize themselves with their organizations (so modified that they often didn't know what it should be) and their men. The men needed to work together and to learn more about their equipment. A division-directed training schedule insured that opportunity to do this would exist. The advantages gained more than offset the loss of the battalion in the field for the week, and concurrently provided a better division reaction force than had been the case.

I did not allow my commanders to become so involved with adding another battalion combat day that they failed to measure battalion effectiveness today and project it for the future operation they were planning. At first, all of the combined training efforts did not stop completely the trend toward less efficient operations because rotational losses continued. However, the tempo of operations gradually increased and incidents and accidents decreased. Ultimately the units again became self-sustaining organizations, capable of enduring even the impact of the announced redeployment without significant loss of tactical effectiveness until, of course, they

## CONFIDENTIAL

entered the planned standdown phase for redeployment.

Replacement Training. The Division Replacement Training School proved to be an extremely effective tool. I personally used it to give my orientation talk to all the replacements, emphasizing ideas I considered important to these new men and, through them, to the division. One significant problem with the school, however, was that of the four-day course. Approximately one-half of the time available was spent on mandatory subjects directed by DA or other headquarters. While some, not all by any means, of these subjects had merit, many could have been presented as part of POR qualification rather than tasking a combat division to present them. Actually, some weeding out of the list is called for.

Concurrent Unit Training. Particular attention must be given to units with multiple capabilities, such as the armored cavalry squadron and the mechanized infantry battalion, to insure retention of their proficiency in the essential skills involved. Continued employment of such units in a highway security role or, in the case of the mechanized infantry battalion in its dismounted role, quickly erodes their ability to operate in a mounted mode, cross-country, with a general loss of flexibility in employment. Other associated techniques, such as use of the engineer CEV and AVLB to advance the force, and the employment of ground resupply, maintenance and evacuation support, also had to be relearned. To overcome these deficiencies, and to overcome the boredom of routine security operations, I organized combined arms teams and assigned to them carefully tailored reconnaissance missions requiring cross-country operations in semi-cleared single canopy areas. These operations concurrently were training exercises and tactical operations, and were paced to take in account the progressive improvement of the unit. Eventually all cavalry troops and mechanized infantry companies had achieved a mounted, cross-country capability. Such employment reduced the helicopter blade time formerly required for their support and assisted in gaining ground access to enemy areas formerly accessible only by air. The latter was particularly useful in the employment of the SP artillery against the 95B Regiment in Base Area 202.

### Intelligence.

The importance of intelligence to successful tactical operations in Vietnam has been stated many times, and I confirm the accuracy of that view, especially in an area where the level of enemy activity is low. The G2 section is still the lead section for tactical planning and its function will be served, if not effectively by the G2, then by someone else--the G3 or the commander.

When contacts with the enemy are insignificant, there is a tendency to rely on information developed by division, lateral, and higher level resources since units in the field do not develop a great deal of information. Under these conditions, the brigade and battalion S2 functions tend

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

to atrophy to a clerical function, the significance of the G2/S2 estimate as the foundation on which all tactical planning and operations are based is eroded, and internal collection plans and agencies, such as the vital DIVARTY S2, artillery battalion S2, FO, and AO link, are not productive.

I found that one of the major problems concerning effective intelligence production was the difficulty in confirming information available to the division as a basis for reaction or for future operations. Since positive intelligence concerning enemy dispositions and activities was rarely available, our tactical operations often took on the form of reconnaissance operations to develop the information needed tactically to dispose our forces. In addition, I gave personal attention to all intelligence reports, even the most fragmentary, and required some form of rapid reaction to each, if only to insure distribution to the field. This effectively multiplied the information available, put subordinate S2's firmly in the business, and improved our continuing estimate. Perhaps the most remunerative action was simply to focus the division's collection effort on specified areas as opposed to the broader view, which was essentially provided by outside agencies anyway. Specific directives for information established a requirement for an effective intelligence system throughout the division, reversing the trend created by the limited enemy activity. It is no great trick to sustain an effective intelligence system when enemy contact is high and there is a volume of data being gathered from all available collection agencies. Maintaining its effectiveness during a period of great personnel turnover, with limited enemy sign, is an important task which the commander must supervise.

Integrated Surveillance System. We established an integrated division surveillance system to cover infiltration and supply corridors within the AO, approaches and crossing points along Highway 19, and likely avenues of approach to major installations along Highway 19. Unattended Ground Sensor (UGS) fields were expanded to include over 225 UGS. A Monitoring Site Element (MSE) of the Battle Area Surveillance System (BASS) was obtained to monitor sensors from Hon Cong Mountain, the dominating terrain feature in the Camp Radcliff area. To obtain maximum area coverage, and, where possible, to have different surveillance means complement one another, planning was closely coordinated for employment of all surveillance means such as radar, searchlights, night observation devices, airborne infrared missions, daylight air reconnaissance, anti-personnel detector (APD) missions, patrols, manned and mechanical ambushes, and observation posts. The ultimate goal was to expand the surveillance system to provide continuous coverage of critical terrain and avenues of approach throughout the AO. The nightly flow of acquired targets and an improved intelligence picture, particularly during the last few months of division operations, proved the usefulness of the system.

Spear Booby Traps. The enemy in the highlands, many of whom are of Montagnard extraction, made effective use of locally available, natural material to harass our forces. One method was the widely-known and publicized

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

punji stake. Another encountered was the spear booby trap, which consisted of a branch or tree tied back and holding a spear. The device is activated by a trip-wire (usually a vine) placed across a trail. When activated, the tied-back branch is released and thrusts a spear at stomach height across the trail. The spear itself may be fastened to the branch, or it may be cast by the branch as it swings on release. While we suffered no casualties from these items, they were a potential threat to dismounted forces in heavy brush. In areas where encountered, I directed point men on trails to wear flak vests as a precaution.

### Operations.

My mission required not only combat operations but also support of the Vietnamization and GVN pacification programs. As a sub-zone coordinator, I also was tasked with certain administrative and security functions. Finally, during my last two months in command, redeployment of the division was a major responsibility.

The nature of the operational environment, including the difficulty of locating the enemy, understandably created a situation where a specific objective to attack was usually rare, vague, or fleeting. As a result, we conducted a preponderance of reconnaissance and security operations, and the opportunities for efficient use of fire and maneuver against a reasonably fixed objective were few. Obvious exceptions were our combat assaults and the defense of our fire bases. Generally, however, small units planned only to move through an area without organic fire support means and to call for fires from higher headquarters if needed. Often when contact was made, the fire support was not as effective as it should have been, and in turn, the maneuvering element did not perform as effectively as it might have. Careful advance planning to insure clear-cut missions and proper combat support and innovative application at all levels of the principles of the objective and of fire and maneuver became the basis for improved performance. Some observations of tactical operations, and actions which I took, are discussed below.

Planning. If the tempo of combat operations required for mission accomplishment is to be maintained, each headquarters must assign to its subordinate elements specific objectives with a requirement that they be accomplished within a designated period. Without such specific direction, the small unit leader is forced to rely solely on his judgment as to what he can and should accomplish, and at what rate. This decision, of course, may not contribute to the result desired by the higher commander who assigned the general mission. Concise and sufficiently detailed direction from above supports mission accomplishment more than submission of plans summaries upward from each level; the upward flow of plans

CONFIDENTIAL



## CONFIDENTIAL

summaries eventually leads to bad staff practices, lack of positive control, and a reduced tempo of operations. I took positive action to insure that staffs at all levels did their jobs, and did not push off their functions to subordinate units. This same approach provided the basis for proper fire support planning at all levels.

It is important that plans for tactical operations include specific objectives to be accomplished. Only by so doing can one insure that the purpose of the operation is being achieved, and that some basis for mission accomplishment is provided. The practice of simply assigning an AO which a unit is to "work out" often results in a lack of coordinated effort among various elements involved in the overall operations; further, units at various levels of command perform tactical operations which do not contribute to the overall objective desired. Much of this is residual to the old search and destroy concept in which body count was the measure of success and no one was particularly concerned with how a unit accomplished this mission in an AO so long as the element oriented on and killed the enemy. While there is much to be said for that approach in another environment, in a situation where the primary missions might be ones of interdiction or reconnaissance, more clearly stated objectives are required for mission accomplishment.

One cannot just simply forward mission-type orders to a brigade headquarters, already encumbered by administrative responsibilities, as it places a task on a brigade staff that they are not organized to perform, especially during a period of high personnel turnover. It also results in inadequate planning and further distorts the TOE as the commander rearranges his personnel to accomplish the tasks he is asked to perform.

To overcome this practice, I required the division staff to develop detailed plans. These were based on my own concept of future operations, periodically announced in a timely manner. This provided time for subordinate commanders to develop their plans concurrent with ours, and for the division staff to develop, in detail, the support requirements essential for such operations. While there were often modifications to such plans, the factors had been carefully considered and the various echelons of command were fully acquainted with the mission.

I also required senior commanders to brief on their plans. This provided me an excellent opportunity to insure that all aspects of tactical planning, including the maneuver, fire support, and other support requirements, had been met, and that their tactics achieved the intent of my concept of operations. In addition, the briefing provided an excellent form of training during the difficult period of personnel turbulence.

Maneuver. The capability to maneuver effectively in the division AO was continually restricted by the jungle terrain, lack of an adequate road net, and inadequate helicopter and engineer support. Consequently, many tactical techniques, such as Eagle Flights, which may have proved effective

## CONFIDENTIAL

could not be sustained, nor could tactical trails be developed extensively to improve the ground mobility of our maneuver elements. Very careful planning to achieve maximum efficiency with the limited resources available was required to maintain the tempo of operations.

Concept of Maneuver. After evaluating the tactical situation in which the division was employed, I determined to reduce to the minimum, search and destroy operations deep in the jungle and to concentrate on interdicting the various infiltration routes closer to the enemy base areas and to the populated regions. By requiring him to come to me, as opposed to going after him, I was able to reduce the overall support requirements, gain more control of troop dispositions, and improve my opportunity to work in support of Vietnamization and pacification.

Flexibility in Operations. It was also important to open up the area of operations so that the efficient use of all available resources could be made. The progressive development of fire support bases throughout the area of operations continued, since this enhanced flexibility significantly; also stressed was the development of roads and trails so that maximum ground access to the AO could be achieved. This latter practice not only saved blade time for more efficient use elsewhere, but also supported the pacification/Vietnamization effort since GVN forces could use improved roads once they became responsible for the area. Also stressed was the increased use of the mechanized units in cross-country operations, off the highway; there is a tendency either to restrict these units to operations in the vicinity of the highway or, in the case of the mechanized infantry units, to use them in a dismounted, air assault role. Neither of these approaches capitalized on the tremendous capabilities of the mechanized units. A dismounted mechanized rifle company will have far fewer men in the field than a normal rifle company and, at the same time, it places more of a demand for helicopter resources. To achieve maximum flexibility, it is essential that every effort be made to utilize to the maximum degree possible all the resources of the division, and to insist that they be employed in a manner compatible with their capabilities.

Surprise and Mutually Supporting Fire Bases. Efficient operations require that careful attention be paid to achieving surprise. The massive effort required to develop or to reoccupy battalion fire support bases immediately signals all enemy elements in the area that operations are about to begin. This, coupled with the pattern-type operations routinely conducted by the maneuver elements, such as the cloverleaf, materially reduces the capability to surprise the enemy. Unless a large force was inserted in the area, the enemy easily evaded the rather limited area of influence that rifle companies can exert at any given time. To expand the impact of our operations over the largest possible area, and to reduce the enemy capability to respond predictably to our operations, I changed the policy of requiring mutually supporting fire bases. The threat in the area did not indicate the requirement for this and, by achieving properly organized defense perimeters, the risk

## CONFIDENTIAL

could be accepted. A key element in this decision was the coordination and integration of all available fires into final protective fires for the fire base, including direct artillery fires, such as killer junior, beehive, and firecracker, from within the fire support base. This requires that artillery pieces be as carefully emplaced to provide final protective fires as are the crew-served weapons along the FEBA.

Coordinated Operations. The nature of the mission, enemy, and AO made it apparent that available division forces alone would be inadequate for decisive operations against the major enemy units along the periphery of the division AO. There were sufficient FVMAF and ARVN forces available in the area to achieve the desired troop density necessary for decisive action. Accordingly, I encouraged coordinated operations against the enemy in established base areas. Combining operations with the ARVN also gave me an opportunity to accomplish support of the Vietnamization program.

Tactical Methods. As usual, enemy activities tended to dictate the tactics employed against him for mission accomplishment. The following are my observations of the effectiveness of various tactical methods in the operations environment described.

Search and Destroy Operations. I found the habitually employed search and destroy operation to be essentially unproductive in my AO. The units that were ordinarily available to commit to an operation usually could not saturate the area and it was difficult to prevent the enemy from evading and to bring him to battle. In addition, since there were never any strong indications of significant enemy cache sites in the AO, area searches were usually unremunerative. The actual company area of influence in such an operation rarely exceeds one square kilometer, and is also not effective as a concurrent interdiction effort. The limited number of subordinate leaders available tended to cause the units to operate in platoon-level formations, heavily loaded down with three-four days' supplies. The overall result was a slow-moving formation which, while adequately searching out its limited area of influence, provided very little information concerning enemy activities in the area in general. It was a small inconvenience for enemy moving along a commo-liaison route to evade an infantry company conducting traditional search and destroy operations.

Reconnaissance Operations. I found that emphasizing reconnaissance operations provided me with a greater probability of initiating contact with the enemy and more information concerning his activities than search and destroy operations. Reconnaissance operations planned specifically as offensive action to establish contact, with emphasis on speed of movement in multi-formations over a broad area against specified target or objective areas, proved to be an excellent method to develop the situation. These operations were also more compatible with my concurrent

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

interdiction mission in the AO and, when properly planned, provided a better basis for a reaction force to pile onto any enemy contacts made. These operations also provided a basis for confirming intelligence information derived from other sources and, properly employed, tended to throw the enemy off-balance and to make him unsure of our activities. Further, they were compatible with the concept of enlarging our area of influence by no longer requiring that fire bases be mutually supporting. It was possible to move units in and out of or through the area to check specific reconnaissance objectives at a pace established by the commander, as opposed to the rate of movement determined by a search operation. These operations also provided an opportunity to employ combat support means, such as air support or artillery raids, against targets that would otherwise not have been uncovered in a stylized search and destroy operation.

Sweep Operations. Sweep operations conducted on a broad front, perhaps as a variation of reconnaissance operations, do have some practical application in the area, although they can be as unproductive as search and destroy operations in fixing the enemy and forcing him to battle. They do, however, have the effect of flushing the enemy from areas in which he may have been employed against the friendly population and forcing him to retreat into his base sanctuaries. When used along the periphery of populated areas and along the enemy's LOCs, such operations compressed the enemy into more remunerative and targetable positions. In much the same way as a shepherd and his dog tend to keep a flock together, it is possible through such operations to achieve a target worthy of attack by superior force. While it is possible to compress the enemy forces by such methods, it is extremely difficult to fix such targets so as to cause the enemy to fight if he does not elect to do so. In a large area of operations where the enemy has no defensible objectives other than his own survival, he will not stand and fight unless all the avenues of escape are blocked and his lines of communication severed.

Encirclement Operations. Fixing the enemy that operated in Base Area 226 by encirclement or sealing-off his avenues of escape would have required a major force and high troop density to be successful. Employment of a single brigade in such circumstances may harass the enemy and may effectively prevent him from accomplishing his mission of inhibiting the pacification effort, but it will not bring him to decisive combat. In the absence of the major force required, such as a combined 4th Division effort with elements of the adjacent ROK and ARVN divisions and the 173d Airborne Brigade, the principal tactical activity that can be accomplished effectively is interdiction operations.

Interdiction Operations. Ample opportunity existed in the division area of interest for interdiction operations, either along the LOCs leading to enemy rear services units, along his various commo-liaison routes, or along his avenues of approach to populated areas. Such operations

CONFIDENTIAL



## CONFIDENTIAL

require that the unit operate on a broad front and that as many points of interdiction be established as can be developed. Qualified unit leadership is essential as units must operate at the fire team level as opposed to the platoon level in order to achieve the coverage on a broad front that is required. Otherwise the enemy simply evades the friendly dispositions and continues to accomplish his mission. All applicable techniques must be stressed, including the offensive use of mechanical ambushes, manned ambushes, daytime patrols, OP's and listening posts. Even the obvious establishment of platoon and company patrol bases along principal routes of infiltration limits the alternatives available to the enemy and channelizes him into the other points of interdiction in the area. In addition, these patrol bases provided the opportunity to bring available fire support, such as the 81mm mortar, into use and to reduce the load carried by the individual soldier, thus making his overall activities more productive. Intelligence reports indicated that such division operations materially reduced the enemy capability to build up his supplies after the Cambodian operations and were undoubtedly important in reducing the level of enemy activities in Binh Dinh Province.

Security Operations. The division was responsible for the security of both Camp Radcliff and the portion of Highway QL 19 within the division AO; hence, security operations, per se, were a matter of utmost importance. Along the highway, such operations usually took the form of OP's established in close proximity to the road and small security forces located at critical points such as bridges and defiles. Essentially, this is a point defense posture since forces were employed to no great depth on each side of the road. It was similar for base defense operations, where a perimeter line provided the immediate security required. Against such disposition the enemy conducts standoff attacks by fire with generally ineffective results. As to QL 19, this type of defense often resulted in the security force itself (combat vehicles and bunkers along the highway) being the target as opposed to enemy attacks against the convoys. To be truly effective, however, we found that such security forces must be augmented by reconnaissance operations, perhaps to a depth of 20 kilometers on either side of the defensive objective. Forces operating thus provided vital information concerning the enemy activities and interdicted his forces before they could be brought to bear against the security objective. Such extended security operations also provided a sound basis for support of the Vietnamization and pacification programs, since the troops employed in these activities have the opportunity to work in close coordination with local territorial forces and concurrently to provide a measure of security to the populated areas.

Tactical Techniques. The concept of tactical operations which I followed and found most successful necessitated careful attention to appropriate tactical techniques. Because of the rapid loss of expertise, emphasis on techniques became a primary area of concern throughout the division. However, as most were basic techniques applicable to a unit in any tactical environment, I shall not elaborate further on them.

## CONFIDENTIAL

Ambush Techniques. Ambush patrols were especially useful in interdiction operations. Even so, I found it necessary to continually emphasize the offensive nature of manned ambushes, and to stress that they be planned carefully and their emplacement supervised by qualified leaders. Unless supervised in detail, ambushes rapidly deteriorate into a form of local security for a platoon night position, with the concept of supporting fires being essentially defensive, rather than offensive.

To cover adequately the expanded AO, the mechanical ambush was very useful. Properly employed in an offensive mode, it multiplies many times the points of interdiction and the area of influence that a unit may have.

I also found the stay-behind ambush to be useful. Inevitably following our retirement from a patrol or fire base, the enemy would reconnoiter the site and some of our most productive contacts resulted from this type of an ambush. Although we had repeated success with this technique, the enemy never seemed able to vary his pattern of operations, invariably conducting reconnaissance of bases following our departure.

Defense Techniques. Perhaps the most remunerative techniques emphasized were those having to do with the defense of fire support bases. By emphasizing the basics, such as the proper emplacement and employment of the M60 machine gun in its final protective fire role; clever use of passive defense measures; active employment of OPs; and insistence on the integration of all fire support, we improved our defenses and enhanced the combat power available, thus releasing maneuver elements for other operations. This improved defensive posture was a factor in using non-mutually supporting fire support bases, which when combined with the additional maneuver elements available permitted me to expand our active AO.

As anyone who has been here knows, a tremendous amount of effort goes into the development of a good fire base. If one is to maintain a proper tempo and flexibility of operations, the amount of time required to reoccupy and reconstruct a fire base should be minimized. Accordingly, prior to leaving a fire base we spent a great deal of time preparing it for our eventual return. For example sandbags were carefully stacked and all overhead materials were arranged so that positions and the entire base might be observed from the air prior to its reoccupation. We did not destroy bunkers or positions which we had previously constructed.

Control of Air Space. Another long-ago-established and important technique that we emphasized was control of the air space above the battlefield. One must emphasize repeatedly the need for the commander on the ground, in many cases a young and relatively inexperienced platoon leader, to control the air above him so that he may concurrently employ his mortars, artillery, gunships and AIREVAC dustoff missions. These may be in

## CONFIDENTIAL

addition to surveillance and command and control aircraft. When improperly controlled, gunships tend to dominate the battlefield to the detriment of all other essential operations in the area. (For example, too many commanders will check-fire artillery when gunships arrive to attack a target. Still others stop all offensive actions in a contact area while AIREVAC operations are conducted.) The commander on the ground can effectively coordinate and control almost all of these operations simultaneously, provided he has planned ahead for such an eventuality, has available to him the normal FO parties and authorized communications (working properly), and has the key positions in his organization filled. If he then demands that his personnel carry out their appropriate functions, he can coordinate the air space conflicts to his advantage.

Fire Support. The difficulty of maintaining organic fire support means in close proximity to the maneuver elements, and the inability of the forward observers to find appropriate vantage points from which to acquire targets and adjust fires led to some bad practices in the employment of fire support. I found the artillery firing units to be proficient and capable of delivering their fires accurately, but there were problems concerning employment, target acquisition, classification of targets, controlled adjustment, and fire support planning.

Employment. Sustained operations over large areas of operation in the Central Highlands had led the division to employ firing batteries habitually in a fragmented manner. Study indicated that this understandable violation of the concept of massed firepower was not required to support my concept of operations in the now-reduced area of operations. A realignment of the maneuver elements of the division permitted the consolidation of artillery into battery-sized elements; the result was maximum effective massed artillery fire support immediately available to all division elements. (And some very happy battery commanders who were finally afforded the opportunity to show their stuff.)

Upon some occasions, I used the technique of artillery or mortar "hip shoots." (I am sure this is not new.) This involves the offsetting of an artillery or 4.2 mortar platoon some distance from the fire support base so that mutual defensive fires could be exchanged or to expand the area of coverage from that available from the fire support base. I controlled this practice carefully and would not allow it to become habitual, else I was back in the business of fragmented artillery and using security forces which could have been better employed as maneuver elements. Actually, I discovered that more frequent moves of the fire support base and/or the establishment of company patrol bases to be an efficient alternative.

Target Acquisition. Intelligence officers should coordinate the employment of the various target acquisition agencies as an important means of collecting intelligence information. Without close supervision,

## CONFIDENTIAL

however, the G2/S2 tends to gain control of the target acquisition means and employ them in a general surveillance role, thus denying their normal employment in direct support of a specific operation. Aggressive employment of target acquisition means so that the division firepower capabilities are fully exploited materially assists the maneuver elements to achieve their objectives and must be given priority over the general intelligence collection effort. I carefully planned the employment of the various target acquisition means available to me to insure that appropriate surveillance was being maintained throughout the AO. To this end, I consolidated all the AN/PPS-5 radars under DIVANTY control, coordinated the employment of Army observation helicopters, and insisted that the artillery maintain aerial observers either available or on station in all operational areas. Further, I made a determined effort to get the authorized FO's back into the unit structure. An infantry battalion, for example, considering FO's from its direct support artillery battalion plus its FO's for organic mortars, should have available some 20 FO's, a sufficient number to permit a qualified observer with each platoon-sized maneuver element. However, during periods of reduced strength, organic FO's are likely to be absorbed into a mortar crew proper and the artillery FO's reduced to the specialist four level. This pitfall restricts the proper application of fires, and no matter how proficient the fire delivery means may be, maximum effect is not achieved.

Adjustment of Fires. As has always been the case, close attention must be paid to the control and adjustment of fires. Organic fire request nets of mortar platoons often are not used, thus necessitating that fire adjustment by platoon or squad leaders be controlled over the command nets. (Frequently, the command net is also being employed on an emergency basis for an AIREVAC.) Obviously, this leads to delays in either the effective employment of the maneuver element or in the application of fires. We used many means to adjust fires and found all of them successful, the FAC's, the gunship pilots, and artillery aerial observers to name only three.

Target Classification. The proper classification of targets is a prelude to proper fire support planning. To call all defensive targets, for example, DELTA TANGOs is to ignore the different techniques employed in delivering defensive fires, and the different intent to be served by such fires. Certainly there is a significant difference between the rectangle of dispersion provided by close defensive fires using a base gun, and final protective fires in which each tube has been individually registered. Often, if one does not carefully classify fires, one also finds DELTA TANGOs being used for offensive operations as opposed to more appropriately planned offensive fires.

In my opinion, one of the most unremunerative fire support activities is the H&I fire program. These fires are usually effective only when enemy activities have been reasonably fixed. Otherwise, fires tend to be placed on localities derived from unrealistic estimates as to where the enemy might be, or from simple assumptions that the enemy might still be present in an area in which he was found to be operating at some time in the past. I eliminated



## CONFIDENTIAL

H&I fire completely unless there was clear evidence that the fires were effective. This also reduced significantly the amount of ammunition expended in the division. The foregoing is directed toward H&I fires of artillery and mortars. There is another weapon, however, with which "H&I" can be used most effectively in a reconnaissance by fire role, and that is the M79 Grenade Launcher. We used this weapon thusly both in the offensive and defensive mode. I cannot leave the M79 without opining that it is one of the finest weapons we have, and the Army is making a grave error if it is superseded by something like the "over and under," which was beginning to arrive in the division. One has merely to figure out how much ammunition the individual soldier can carry to find credence for my argument.

Fire Support Planning. The extensive areas of operation assigned to maneuver elements and the wide separation of forces allowed fire support coordination and control to be decentralized to the maximum. As a result, the decision-making level for determination of which fire support means to employ is frequently as low as company level.

I insisted that the fire support planning system work throughout all echelons of the division. This was not easy because where a fire direction center does not exist above battery level, there is a tendency to ignore proper fire planning procedures. Nonetheless, I directed that appropriate fires be planned to support either the offensive or defensive maneuver envisioned, in order to take maximum advantage of all available weapons systems. Target lists were developed, approved, and disseminated to all users who might conceivably have need for the fires. In this regard, proper plans will often require specific arrangements to insure that artillery FOs are airborne or that the mortars have been inserted in a location from which they may provide the required support.

I found that many commanders were relying heavily on gunship support rather than on artillery or mortars, even though the latter two were often better suited for the targets identified. The great flexibility of the gunship and its ability to observe the battlefield make it a valuable weapons system; however, it is difficult to maintain and often its ordnance is not as effective as artillery. I emphasized the employment of artillery as the most responsive and accurate means of fire support (particularly in a jungle environment) and it demonstrated many times its ability to "thread the eye of the needle."

### Combat Support.

Aviation Support. I found that aviation assets must be centrally controlled to meet the requirement for immediate reaction. In most cases, this can be most easily accomplished by placing assets, otherwise fragmented within the division, OPCON to division headquarters and under the control of the division aviation officer. With the limited organic assets available to the ROAD division, tailoring of aviation assets for specified missions

## CONFIDENTIAL

becomes necessary for day-to-day operations. Additionally, because of multiple single-ship missions, aircraft must be centrally controlled to allow short-notice reassembly of aircraft if necessary for more tactically advantageous missions. Although a truism, maximum effectiveness can only be realized with limited assets if missions are well-planned, coordinated, and executed.

Dedicated Aircraft for Maneuver Commanders. Battalion commanders must have the capability of visiting with and supervising their units daily, but with my limited air assets this was a continual problem. It was not unusual to have companies, and even platoons, operating from patrol bases at significant distances from the firebases of their parent unit. Without an aircraft responsive to their needs, battalion commanders were often unable to visit their companies for several days at a time. The battalion commander was dependent on either obtaining an observation helicopter from the brigade or using the resupply helicopter made available on a scheduled basis by the brigade aviation officer. Frequently this did not provide the flexibility needed by the commander; additionally, it involved rather complicated staff effort at brigade level to insure proper utilization of helicopters allocated by division. I determined that the whole operation could be simplified with improved efficiency all around by providing each maneuver element in the field with one slick daily which belonged exclusively to the battalion for all purposes of resupply and command and control. As battalion commanders came to depend on this aircraft, their supervision of subordinate elements improved, resupply was more dependable, and greater flexibility in the maneuver of combat elements was achieved. (This probably was an innovation only to this division--I am sure it is not new to others.)

Aircraft Utilization. Aviation assets required constant evaluation and re-evaluation during all phases of operation. However, if broken down into two main areas of concentration--utilization and maintenance--I found it easily controlled. In a highlands environment, it became critical to have aviation assets available and operating, because of the lack of ground communication.

Proper utilization greatly influences availability, scheduled down time, timely and effective combat support, and subsequent economically-oriented operations. The only practical way to improve utilization is to monitor continually all aspects of mission planning, conduct, and accomplishment. This monitoring must be at the highest level involved in the operation, and can be most easily screened by utilization reports. I required each aircraft commander to complete, for each mission flown, a mission utilization form, showing sorties, PZ and LZ, take-off and arrival time, number of passengers, and percent of allowable cargo load actually transported. Additionally, I enjoined all commanders to ask themselves before, during, and after an aircraft allocation is contemplated and/or received: Were we productive? Did we waste blade time? Did we use more or less aircraft than

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were needed to meet the mission time frame? If any commander in the chain of command observes any two variables that do not agree, he must demand to know why!

Chemical Support. The use of herbicides in triple canopy jungle area inhabited by a Montagnard population not under effective control of the Vietnamese government, can be an important means by which enemy use of sanctuaries and infiltration routes may be reduced, and by which the crops developed by his production units may be destroyed. The herbicides program is an important weapon of war and, in the Central Highlands, is an effective economy-of-force measure.

Some imagination is required if the flame capability of the division is to be employed effectively. Flame is a fine psychological weapon, and should be demonstrated in such a manner as to cause the enemy to take counsel of his fears when contemplating attacking friendly installations. Flame tracks are particularly useful in bridge security near populated areas, where the use of other weapons might cause civilian casualties.

Engineer Support. I consider the division engineer to be an important agent of the G2's collection plan. Detailed data concerning roads, crossing sites, topography, and cross-country trafficability are important to all elements in the field. Conversely, elements operating in the field provide an excellent opportunity for the engineer to reconnoiter or to request information about designated areas. This engineer function is one which requires command attention if it is to be used to the overall advantage of the division.

### Vietnamization

Vietnamization operations consisted primarily of efforts to upgrade the RF/PF units in our AO and to conduct combined operations with the ARVN 22d Division. In all these operations, I found that the greatest advantage could be gained by working closely together and frequently combining the two forces as one unit in the same AO. While the latter tends to complicate some aspects of the operation and may even slow its tempo, the resulting exchange of techniques, ideas, and mutual respect provides one of the most lasting effects that a tactical unit can achieve. In addition, whenever possible we permitted company or platoon patrol bases to locate themselves in or adjacent to RF/PF compounds, thus reducing security requirements and releasing maneuver elements for operations elsewhere. At the same time, an opportunity for instruction to the RF/PF element was provided.

### Civil Affairs Operations

Originally, the division was operating in An Tuc District with 18 battalion CA teams. I felt that this organization was too cumbersome to produce the best results and, therefore, had my G5 develop a new CA concept consisting of four division CA Village Support Teams, and one District Support Team. Each of the two brigades provided two Village Support Teams, and DISCOM provided the District Support Team. The District Support Team was

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organized to provide support beyond the capability of the Village Support Teams. This concept reduced the number of personnel required for the original 18 teams and increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the CA effort by providing more centralized control. The concept was comparable to having a small CA company controlled by the G5 working within the division.

### Base Operations - Installation Defense.

Prior to August 1970, individual soldiers on the Camp Radcliff bunker line were restricted from employing their weapons except during the scheduled fire program or against a known hostile target. Recognizing that this restrictive use of small arms detracted from the overall security, I initiated a free-fire policy for small arms (including the M-79 grenade launcher) from the bunker line. Wide publicity of this policy had the fallout effect of reducing exfiltration from Camp Radcliff, as well as the direct effect of enhancing overall base camp security; it kept guards more alert and interested because it gave them something to do besides just stare off into the night.

### Redeployment Operations.

The success of a major redeployment program such as that undertaken by the division is dependent upon minute planning and a specially tailored task organization. While this statement is not innovative, it does reflect the shift in supervisory emphasis required in redeployment operations. Mission orders and generalized staff supervision are not adequate to the task. Each unit, regardless of size, that enters standdown and begins either inactivation or redeployment activities must be given detailed instructions and specific goals (within time frames) for each of the functions it is required to perform. Division staff agencies must be attuned to the myriad of problems that face such a unit and must assist in alleviating these problems. Both staffs and units must tailor themselves to the jobs at hand, and a careful review of such tailoring and organization must be made to insure adequacy. No detail is too insignificant for scrutiny by the division staff. I analyzed programmed objectives and goals daily and had shortfalls highlighted for my immediate attention. In this manner, I obtained a degree of assurance that the redeployment operation was running smoothly. We left nothing to chance. The details of our redeployment program may be found in the 4th Infantry Division Keystone Robin-B After Action Report, so I shall discuss redeployment no further.

### Logistics.

The logistics situation must receive the same detailed command interest as is afforded the tactical and intelligence situations. Daily equipment status reports and briefings, frequent unannounced equipment spot checks, and vigorous follow-up action on requisitions are essential to achieving a

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high level of operational readiness.

Excess Equipment and Supplies. We implemented definitive programs to identify and eliminate excess and unneeded supplies and equipment at every level of command. My goal was the retention of only the minimum equipment essential to the accomplishment of the mission. From squad to division level, I found that units were burdening themselves with excess and unneeded supplies and equipment which adversely affected both the effectiveness of the unit and the operational readiness of equipment. During the period 1 July through 30 September 1970, our program netted the return to the supply system of items costing over \$9,000,000.

Conservation of Materiel. I insisted that all commanders recognize that, the war notwithstanding, we had entered an era of strict accountability for and maintenance of materiel assets. Requisitioning procedures, reports of survey, accountability, logistics, and maintenance now demand the personal attention of the commander more than at any time in the past. I made it clearly understood that a commander's efficiency is judged and recorded, not only on the degree to which he looks after his personnel and combats the enemy, but also on his success in materiel readiness and resources conservation. CMMI and AGI inspections reflect performance in both readiness and conservation. Unsatisfactory ratings on these inspections were not condoned, and I established and practiced the policy that the commander of a unit so failing ran the grave risk of being denied the privilege of command. As I knew would happen, units improved remarkably.

Maintenance Management. I have never accepted the theory that the Annual Command Maintenance Management Inspection (CMMI) is a valid means of assessing the current status of maintenance management within the division. It is an indication, but the inspections were too infrequent to provide the continuing assessment required, and were not truly representative of daily conditions, since units prepared extensively for the CMMI. I also do not consider the CMMI to be a valid source for information required by the commander. I found that to gain valid and current knowledge of a unit's maintenance posture, spot inspections of both equipment and maintenance systems inspections included, for example, inspecting a particular commodity in a unit and following through on the status of requisitions, PLL, and job orders. Inspecting both the condition of equipment and the system for maintaining it provided a valid assessment of maintenance management. I tasked our CMMI Team to conduct the inspections and was able to implement the program without additional personnel or resources.

Aircraft Availability. The operational readiness of my limited organic aircraft capability was of utmost concern to me. Commanders tend to be guilty in varying degrees of allowing aircraft maintenance and utilization to overwhelm them with an aura of mystery completely unfounded. Without hesitation

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and with great confidence, commanders check maintenance programs and utilization procedures on every other type of Army equipment, but it seems that aircraft must forever remain something highly mysterious left solely to the technician. I attempted to dissuade my commanders from this pitfall and to make them realize that the aircraft can be tamed in exactly the same manner as was the homely jeep. I believe that only through the personal involvement of commanders concerned can a consistently high availability rate be maintained.

### Personnel

Drug Abuse. As we all know, the abuse of drugs can sap the strength of any unit and is a problem of continuing concern to each command. While educational and punitive measures have a role in deterring a man from beginning to use drugs, attention must also be given to salvaging the man already on narcotics. Our division Drug Amnesty Program provided an alternative not heretofore available to the man who sincerely desired to discontinue his drug use. It removed the fear of disciplinary action and offered medical, spiritual and personal counseling to assist him in his withdrawal. By demonstrating the command's sincere concern for the soldier, the program aimed at the rehabilitation of those who have realized that drugs offer no lasting answers to their problems. In the past two years, and more particularly in the last four months, the sincere compassion and personal interest of commanders and their staffs attracted increasing numbers of men to the program. By voluntarily acknowledging his use of drugs, the individual declared his serious intent for rehabilitation. I, in turn, guaranteed the individual that no disciplinary action would be taken for past drug offenses and offered the resources of the chaplains, surgeons, and all other appropriate agencies of the division. These professionals were geared to assist the individual return to a more normal and productive mode of behavior. The success of our amnesty program was due to the fact that it involved all echelons of command, from myself to the squad leader. It was based on the recognition that each soldier is an important individual. The 4th Infantry Division went on record as having an obligation to return a man from its ranks as good as, if not better, than when he joined.

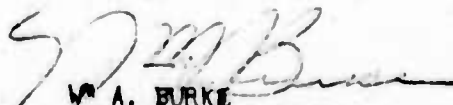
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## CONCLUSIONS

I have given careful thought to developing conclusions concerning my experiences as Commander of this proud old infantry division. I am forced to conclude that there is nothing unique or special about combat operations in the Central Highlands against the NVA/VC that is not an expected variation or adaptation of established methods and procedures normal to any military operation executed in a professional manner. I have read many "lessons learned" and after action reports during my 22 months in Vietnam (14 of which were command) and found them generally instructive and excellent refreshers of accepted doctrine. Their primary merit is their confirmation that there is no substitute for high standards established and achieved in all the functions of command. This, in turn, requires great attention to the training and professional knowledge of the command and adherence to established doctrine.

The so-called evolution of tactics in Vietnam, when subjected to close scrutiny, generally revealed a shifting of goals or objectives by a higher command in relation to the ever-changing operational situation. A tactical unit involved will still respond as it always has: when it is not in contact, it looks for the enemy; when it finds the enemy, it tries to fix him and, having fixed him, it fights the enemy with all the means at its disposal. Knowing how to employ these means--the result of training and professional knowledge--is the key.

It seems to me that the second most important action that the commander can take is also fundamental; i.e., adhere to the principle of the objective. Clear-cut goals, with appropriate implementing orders properly developed through the normal planning sequence, provide subordinate commanders the time to use troop-leading procedures and the guidance and control they need. Such action materially enhances the combat power of the unit, but only if it is followed up by a standard of supervision which insists that effort expended be related to established goals and tests the results in practical terms.

  
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